

Louisiana Watershed Initiative Interstate Summit

GOHSEP Deputy Director Casey Tingle was one of the featured speakers at this week's Louisiana Watershed Initiative Interstate Summit held at the Bossier Civic Center.

The Louisiana Watershed Initiative welcomed representatives from Arkansas, Mississippi and Texas at the summit which took place June 12th.

Participants included a wide range of experts in flood risk, water management, emergency response, disaster recovery, resilience, habitat preservation and environmental quality. They discussed potential coordination with Louisiana's new watershed approach to reducing risks of flood damage. The approach is organized along regional watersheds, several of which are shared with neighboring states.

"Interstate cooperation is absolutely critical to a true watershed strategy," Pat Forbes, executive director of the Office of Community Development, said. "We want to let neighboring states know what we're doing, learn about their water management efforts and start the conversation on working together for everyone's benefit."



The Louisiana Watershed Initiative is the programming arm of the state's Council on Watershed Management, which Gov. John Bel Edwards created last year in response to the state's historic 2016 floods. In 2018, Congress allocated \$1.2 billion to support the state's flood mitigation efforts.

Under the new approach, the state is working at the watershed level to coordinate efforts that reduce the risk of flood damage. Ultimately,

communities in each watershed must set priorities, develop policies and make decisions based on how water moves within the watershed, regardless of city and parish lines.

Louisiana is one of the first states to implement the watershed approach on a statewide level.

The watershed approach also emphasizes the use of objective, scientific data for decision-making and priority-setting. In its next steps, the Watershed Initiative will develop a statewide network for collecting high-quality data on rainfall and river levels, along with advanced computer modeling that tracks and predicts water movement throughout each watershed.

From The Director



I hope summer is off to a great start for all of you. In emergency management, summer means ramping up for hurricane season. Governor Edwards and I recently joined New Orleans city officials for a hurricane preparedness event held at the pump station near the 17th Street Canal. We both highlighted the tremendous strides we have made in the 14 years since Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Many of you, working with our local and state partners, have helped make those improvements possible. GOHSEP continues the planning meetings with emergency managers in central and north Louisiana in order to make sure our coordination lines are strong as we face any future events.

GOHSEP and DCFS helped lead the 2019 Louisiana Emergency Repatriation Tabletop Exercise. Once again, Louisiana is near the top in preparing for this type of event which involves a scenario where thousands of U.S. citizens are forced to flee a foreign country due to political unrest or an emergency. If evacuation flights are routed to Louisiana (New Orleans), the exercise tested the response and steps to process those individuals as they re-entered the country.

On the recovery side, we continue to review many of the recent weather related emergencies. It appears we have enough data to appeal the Individual Assistance denial on behalf of the three parishes impacted by the Ruston area tornado outbreak. We may also seek more assistance related to the record-breaking, river flood fight which continues. GOHSEP employees have stepped up in many ways to help with damage assessment work and support for those efforts.

On a personal note, summer temperatures actually arrived well ahead of the official start of summer. Use caution if you're working outdoors or taking part in any outdoor activities. The extreme heat we have experienced can quickly turn dangerous.

Thanks for all you do protecting our citizens and helping them recover from emergencies.

- James Waskom

State And Federal Officials Assess Hurricane Preparedness In The New Orleans Area

NEW ORLEANS—Today, Gov. John Bel Edwards, along with local, state, and federal officials, addressed the state of hurricane preparedness for the greater New Orleans area for the 2019 hurricane season that began on June 1st. The event was held at the 17th Street Canal Permanent Canal Closure Pump (PCCP) station, one of three state of the art facilities with permanent gates and pumps built to lessen the chance of the same kind of storm surge flooding that New Orleans experienced during Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The governor spoke of other gates, pumps and levee improvements that now form the Hurricane Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS), a system that provides the best level of risk reduction the greater New Orleans area has ever had.

“We stand today inside one of the most advanced pump stations in the country,” said Edwards. “It is just one of many parts of larger \$14.6 billion storm risk reduction system that also includes 350 miles of levees and floodwalls, 73 non-federal pumping stations, and several major gated structures.” Edwards said he is confident the state is prepared for the 2019 hurricane season, which began June 1st, as efforts to better manage storm water are ongoing.

Outfall canals at 17th Street, Orleans Avenue and London Avenue were originally built to allow gravity to drain storm water into Lake Pontchartrain. During Katrina the lake reversed the flow, pushing lake water into the canals, overwhelming the system and flooding the city. A similar lack of gated structures on the perimeter of the system, especially on the Industrial Harbor Navigation Canal (IHNC) and on the West Bank, allowed storm surge to overpower area defenses.

“Despite vastly improved defenses, please [Get a Game Plan](#) and be prepared to evacuate when local officials say you should do so,” said James Waskom, Director of the Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness. “Leaving when told to is the best way to save your own life. Meanwhile, all the agencies represented here are working hard to ensure that you’ll have a safe place to come home to.”

Hurricane season ends November 30. The National Weather Service is expecting more than a dozen storms, including two to four major hurricanes, this season.

For additional information visit:

www.getagameplan.org

www.noaa.gov

www.weather.gov



Hurricane Season Preparations

Zachary - GOHSEP's Emergency Management Training Section hosted a two day training and exercise event with our local partners from the city of New Orleans and the New Orleans Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (NOHSEP) in preparation for hurricane season. The training and exercise took place at the Joint Emergency Series Training Center (JESTC) in Zachary. Pre-landfall discussions ascertained pre-disaster contracts, emergency evacuations, and methods of supporting safe evacuations such as contraflow: (Executed by law enforcement utilizing all lanes of traffic for one flow of direction out of the threatened region). Post landfall, training discussions examined damage assessments, security, and re-entry. Being prepared means having the training and systems in place, understanding roles and responsibilities between the State and our local partners, and answering the hard questions to protect the safety and well-being of our citizens.

St. James Coordination Meeting



GOHSEP recently participated in an emergency coordination meeting in St. James Parish. GOHSEP Assist Section Chief Mel Gaspard explained GOHSEP's role in support of our local partners during the meeting held at the Convent Community Center on June 5th.

2019 Louisiana Emergency Repatriation Tabletop Exercise



Baton Rouge - GOHSEP, in conjunction with our state and federal partners recently participated in the 2019 Louisiana Emergency Repatriation Tabletop Exercise. In this exercise, roughly 1,200 American citizens per day are arriving in New Orleans after an emergency evacuation from a foreign country due to political unrest. This scenario tests how that process would work with each participating agency.

Parish Profile - West Feliciana Parish

Local Volunteer Group Recognized for Community Service

In the wake of the August 2016 flooding there was a tremendous need for coordination of relief and recovery efforts carried out by volunteer groups in West Feliciana Parish. In this time of great need local volunteers came together as a team of dedicated and talented leaders to manage volunteers, donated goods and resources, and outside assistance. Their professional management was vital to assist flood victims in everything from mucking out homes to being fed and immunized.

As a result of their efforts in response to the flood, this group of local citizens saw a need to continue with recovery assistance to their affected neighbors. This included setting up and managing disaster assistance to help with the complicated issues that arose when victims began dealing with FEMA and the state. The group went on to assist with case management of victim's claims and providing financial assistance to help those affected get back into their homes.

Realizing the process would take time, the group began meeting regularly and eventually formed the West Feliciana Volunteers for Response and Recovery Foundation (WVRRF). The status as a foundation would allow them to receive and expend funds on behalf of those in need.

Captain Brian Spillman, Director of Homeland Security for West Feliciana Parish is very appreciative of their efforts. "The WVRRF has demonstrated their ability to see a problem, identify needs and rapidly activate in a respectful and professional manner to assist wherever they can." "They're a great asset to our parish and we're blessed to have this group of dedicated volunteers." Their members are local professionals, retirees, clergy, homemakers, and other civic-minded leaders who have come together to do what they do best—assist their neighbors in need. Their neighbors can be across the street or across the globe.

In September 2017, while still assisting local flood victims, WVRRF led a local humanitarian aid effort to help the citizens of Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria. They collected, inventoried and prepared for shipment 28 boxes containing almost 900 items including baby formula, anti-bacterial wipes and other hygiene supplies.

The WVRRF recently partnered with the West Feliciana Fire Protection District and the American Red Cross to provide and install over 50 smoke detectors in local homes.

All of this hasn't gone unnoticed. The [Louisiana Emergency](#)



On hand in Lake Charles to receive the 2019 LEPA Award for Leadership in Emergency Preparedness are (L to R) Brian Spillman, WF Director of Homeland Security; WVVRRF members John Rogers, Tom Hilderbrandt, Ned Franklin, Cheryl Franklin, Earline Blackmore and WVVRRF Chairman Ed Leachman.

[Preparedness Association](#) presented WVVRRF with the 2019 LEPA Award for Leadership in Emergency Preparedness. Several of the board members traveled to Lake Charles on May 14th to receive the award. "This award shows that others are aware of their efforts and recognizes this group as an example of how volunteers working together can solve problems," Spillman said.

WVVRRF continues to address local opportunities to help wherever they can. Training in the fields of CPR and First Aid, Sheltering, Incident Management and Volunteer Management has been completed. And they're working with local government and faith-based groups in hopes of establishing a dedicated facility to be used as a shelter for parish residents affected by future disasters.

Founded:	1824
Named For:	Marie Félicité de Gálvez
Largest City:	St. Francisville
Total Area:	426 square miles
Population (2015):	15,385



OHSEP Director
Captain Brian Spillman
 (225) 635-6428
bspillman@wfpsso.org
www.wfpsso.org

New Parish OEP Director

Myrtle Green is the newest West Carroll OEP Director as of June 1st. Myrtle may be contacted at (318) 428-8020, or by email at myrtle09262018@gmail.com.



JUNE BIRTHDAYS

For questions or comments about the birthdays, contact: Tiffany Johnson - tiffany.l.johnson@la.gov

Jim Ballow (Preparedness)	06/01	Andreas Hansen (Facility Management)	06/15
John Colvin (Public Assistance Closeout)	06/05	Mildred Leopold (Recovery Grants Administration)	06/17
Winfield Leblanc (Public Assistance Grants)	06/08	Gabrielle Brown (Public Assistance Closeout)	06/19
Brian Fletcher (Public Assistance SALs)	06/09	Rebecca Arnold (Public Assistance Closeout)	06/19
Lisa Tucker (Sub-recipient Monitoring)	06/09	Erica Thigpen (State Management Cost)	06/20
Darren Guidry (Regional Support)	06/10		

UPCOMING EVENTS

To sign up or for more information about the training, visit: gohsep.la.gov/resources/training-events-schedule

TRAINING

July 15– 19, 2019	Communications Training: Communications Unit Technician (COMT) - Gonzales, Louisiana
July 30- Aug 1, 2019	ICS 300 Intermediate ICS & ICS 400 Advanced Incident Command System - Zachary, Louisiana
Aug 6-8, 2019	Wide Area Search - Amite, Louisiana
Aug 19, 2019	PER 294 Testing an Emergency Operations Plan in a Rural Emergency Operations Center - Eunice, Louisiana
Aug 21-22, 2019	ICS 300 Intermediate ICS & ICS 400 Advanced Incident Command System - Madisonville, Louisiana
Aug 23, 2019	PER 374 Active Threats on Campuses: Protective Measures and Response - Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Aug 28, 2019	ICS 400 Advanced Incident Command System - Madisonville, Louisiana
Oct 14-18, 2019	Communications Unit Technician (COMT) - Gonzales, Louisiana
Oct 23-24, 2019	MGT 345 Disaster Management for Electric Power Systems - New Orleans, Louisiana
Nov 4-5, 2019	Law Enforcement Prevention & Deterrence of Terrorist Acts - Scott, Louisiana
Nov 5-7, 2019	PER 229 Intro to Computer-Aided Management of Emergency Operations (CAMEO) - Lake Charles, Louisiana
Nov 13-14, 2019	MGT 317 Disaster Management for Public Services - New Orleans, Louisiana
Dec 3-4, 2019	MGT-319 Medical Countermeasures: Point of Dispensing, Plan & Response - Monroe, Louisiana
Dec 4-5, 2019	MGT 341 Disaster Preparedness for Hospitals & Healthcare Organizations - New Orleans, Louisiana
Jan 28-29, 2020	MGT 343 - Disaster Management for Water & Wastewater Utilities - Chalmette, Louisiana

NEW AGENCY HIRES

Jezreel Joseph Attorney (Legal)	Fayth Golden Administrative Assistant (Facility Management)
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LATERAL TRANSFERS

Teidra Clark:- Team Lead (Hazard Mitigation Grants)

UPCOMING STATE HOLIDAYS

Independence Day - July 4, 2019

Declared Holiday - July 5, 2019

Request For Articles

If you would like to include an article in future issues of *The GOHSEP Focus*, please contact: Your designated Agency Representative or

Mike Steele
(225) 925-3966
mike.steele@la.gov

Steven Burr
(225) 925-7423
steve.burr@la.gov



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